Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A method of calculating an optimum exposure amount of an electronic camera in short period after beginning a prepare operation of exposure, the electronic camera having a photoreceptor device that receives light from a subject and outputs signals corresponding to an image of the subject, the method comprising the steps of:

performing ~~an~~ a first exposure operation of the photoreceptor at a fixed first exposure amount after insecurity period of the photoreceptor device from beginning a prepare operation of exposure to obtain a first output, the fixed first exposure amount being set without calculating the fixed first exposure amount;

performing ~~an~~ a second exposure operation of the photoreceptor at a fixed second exposure amount sequence to the first exposure operation to obtain a second output, the fixed second exposure amount being set without calculating the fixed second exposure amount;

calculating a first signal level based on the first output;

calculating a second signal level based on the second output;

comparing the first signal level with the second signal level and selecting the signal level closest to ~~an optimum~~a predetermined exposure amount as a selected exposure amount; and

changing the selected exposure amount by a prescribed amount smaller than a difference between the fixed first exposure amount and the fixed second exposure amount.

13. ((Currently Amended)) The method of claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

performing an exposure operation at the changed selected exposure amount to obtain a third output; and

further changing the previously selected exposure amount until the third output is within a predetermined range of the ~~optimum~~ predetermined exposure amount.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

prior to the comparing step, performing ~~an~~ a third exposure operation of the photoreceptor at a fixed third exposure amount sequence to the second exposure operation to obtain a third output, the fixed third exposure amount being set without calculating the fixed third exposure amount; and

calculating a third signal level based on the third output, wherein the comparing step compares the first signal level, the second signal level and the third signal level to select the signal level closest to the ~~optimum~~ predetermined exposure amount as the selected exposure amount.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the prescribed amount is smaller than a difference between the fixed first exposure amount and the fixed second exposure amount and ~~is smaller than a difference between the first exposure amount and the second exposure amount and~~ is smaller than a difference between the fixed second exposure amount and the fixed third exposure amount.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the fixed first exposure amount, the fixed second exposure amount and the fixed third exposure amount are different shutter speeds.

17. (Original) The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of storing the first output and the second output prior to the comparing step.

18. (New) An electronic camera, comprising:

a photoreceptor device that receives light from a subject and outputs signals corresponding to an image of the subject;

a setting device that sets an exposure at a time of photographing the subject; and

a calculation device that calculates the exposure in short period after beginning a prepare operation of exposure to be set by the setting device, wherein a first output of the photoreceptor device is determined when a fixed first exposure amount is set by the setting device without calculating the fixed first exposure amount and the subject is photographed, a second output of the photoreceptor device is determined when a fixed second exposure amount is set by the setting device without calculating the fixed second exposure amount and the subject is photographed sequence to the first exposure operation, the calculation device compares the first output and the second output and the one closest to a predetermined exposure amount is selected as a selected exposure amount, the predetermined exposure amount is determined based on the output of the photoreceptor device, wherein the selected exposure amount is changed by a prescribed value that is smaller than a difference between the fixed first exposure amount and the fixed second exposure amount.

19. (New) The electronic camera of claim 1, wherein a third output of the photoreceptor device is determined when a fixed third exposure amount is set by the setting device without calculating the fixed third exposure amount and the subject is photographed, the calculation device compares the first output, the second output and the third output and the one closest to the predetermined exposure amount is selected as the selected exposure amount, wherein the selected exposure amount is incrementally changed by the prescribed value that is smaller than the difference between the fixed first exposure amount and the fixed

second exposure amount and is smaller than the difference between the fixed second exposure amount and the fixed third exposure amount.

20. (New) The electronic camera of claim 2, wherein a ratio of light of the fixed first exposure amount, the fixed second exposure amount and the fixed third exposure amount is 1:8:64.

21. (New) The electronic camera of claim 2, wherein the fixed first exposure amount, the fixed second exposure amount and the fixed third exposure amount correspond to different shutter speeds.

22. (New) The electronic camera of claim 1, wherein signals corresponding to the first output and the second output are stored in a memory device.

23. (New) The electronic camera of claim 1, wherein the electronic camera continues to change the selected exposure amount until an output of the photoreceptor device corresponding to the selected exposure amount is within a predetermined range of the optimum exposure amount.